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Department of State

EXCISE

TELEGRAM

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 02711 01 OF 02 0502232 POSS DUPE
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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ICA-11 /071 W
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P 0502102 MAR 80
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4660
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
COMUSKOREA SEOUL KS//BJ-IS
CHJUSMAG SEOUL KS
SA CINCUNC KS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 SEOUL 02711

E.O. 12065: GDS 3/4/86 (CLARK, WILLIAM) OR-P
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, SHUM, KS
SUBJECT: THE KNIVES COME OUT AS THE THREE KIMS START TO CAMPAIGN FOR THE PRESIDENCY IN EARNEST
1. (C) ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: AS DRP PRESIDENT KIM JONG-PIL, NDP PRESIDENT KIM YONG-SAM, AND FORMER PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE KIM TAE-CHUNG JOCKEY FOR POSITION, THE RESTORATION OF THE POLITICAL RIGHTS OF THE LATTER MAN AND RELAXED CENSORSHIP HAVE MADE MUTUAL CRITICISMS SHARPER AND MORE PUBLIC. THE SHARPEST PUBLIC CRITICISM SO FAR HAS BEEN WITHIN THE NDP, WITH KIM TAE-CHUNG SAYING IN A WIDELY-REPORTED NEW YORK TIMES INTERVIEW THAT KIM YONG-SAM HAS MISMANAGED THE PARTY AND PUT PERSONAL AMBITION AHEAD OF PARTY WELFARE.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY H. Teeple DATE 8/18/82
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

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SUMMARY.

3. THE JOCKEYING FOR POWER THAT BEGAN ALMOST IMMEDIATELY AFTER PRESIDENT PARK'S ASSASSINATION LAST OCTOBER HAS TAKEN ON A NEW INTENSITY AS CENSORSHIP IS RELAXED AND KIM TAE-CHUNG IS ALLOWED TO BE QUOTED IN THE MEDIA. THE MOST VISIBLE COMPETITION SO FAR HAS BEEN NOT BETWEEN DRP PRESIDENT KIM JONG-PIL AND HIS NDP RIVALS, BUT BETWEEN KIM YONG-SAM AND KIM TAE-CHUNG, WITH THE NDP NOMINATION FOR THE PRESIDENCY AS THE PRIZE. WHILE BOTH KIMS SAY THAT THEY ARE MORE INTERESTED IN THE RESTORTION OF DEMOCRACY THAN PERSONAL POLITICAL AGGRANDIZEMENT, THE SNIPING HAS STARTED. THE STRONGEST CRITICISM SO FAR CAME MARCH 3, WITH LOCAL REPORTS OF KIM TAE-CHUNG'S LATEST INTERVIEW IN THE NEW YORK TIMES. KIM WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THE NDP PRESIDENT (KIM YONG-SAM) FAILED TO LEAD THE PARTY PROPERLY FOLLOWING PRESIDENT PARK'S DEATH, AND THAT KIM YONG-SAM HAD PUT HIS PERSONAL AMBITION BEFORE HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AS THE PARTY'S LEADER. ON THE SAME DAY, AT A PARTY REORGANIZATION MEETING IN TAEGU, KIM YONG-SAM GAVE HIMSELF MAJOR CREDIT FOR THE EVENTS WHICH LED UP TO PARK'S DEATH. AT THE SAME MEETING, AN NDP VICE PRESIDENT WAS SHOUTED DOWN, MOSTLY BY THOSE FAVORING KIM YONG-SAM, WHEN HE SAID THAT KIM TAE-CHUNG, HAM SOK-HON AND YUN PO-SUN SHOULD BE GIVEN MEDALS FOR THEIR STRUGGLES FOR DEMOCRACY.

4. WE EXPECT THE MUTUAL CRITICISMS OF THE TWO NDP KIMS TO GROW IN STRIDENCY AS EACH ATTEMPTS TO EXPLOIT HIS PARTICULAR STRENGTH.

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KIM TAE-CHUNG ALSO HAS A NUMBER OF ARDENT SUPPORTERS WHO HAVE BEGUN TO ESTABLISH OFFICES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY TO FURTHER THEIR MENTOR'S RACE FOR THE NDP NOMINATION.

5. KIM YONG-SAM'S MAJOR STRENGTH

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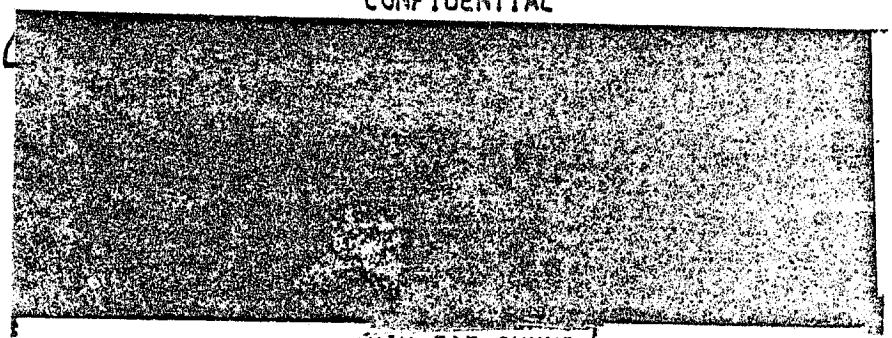

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KIM TAE-CHUNG.

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SAYS THAT THE PARTY'S PRESENT EFFORTS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TOWARD FURTHERING DEMOCRATIC PROGRESS.

6. ALTHOUGH KIM YONG-SAM HAS YET TO CRITICIZE KIM TAE-CHUNG DIRECTLY, THE TEMPTATION TO DO SO WILL GROW, AIDED OF COURSE BY THE PRESS. HOWEVER, THERE ARE FACTORS WHICH MAY KEEP MUTUAL RECRIMINATION IN BOUNDS.

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EXCISE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SEOUL 02711 02 OF 02 0502292 POSS DUPE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 SEOUL 02711

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7. ANOTHER CONSIDERATION WHICH MAY MODERATE THE SHRILL-NESS OF POTENTIAL ATTACKS NOT ONLY WITHIN THE NDP, BUT ALSO BETWEEN THE PARTY AND THE DRP, IS

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WE ASSUME THAT DRP PRESIDENT KIM JONG-PIL HAD THIS IN MIND WHEN HE SAID DURING A RECENT SPEECH THAT IT IS "REGRETTABLE" THAT SOME THINK THAT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT BRINGS SOCIAL UNREST.
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PAGE 02 SEOUL 02711 02 OF 02 0502292 POSS DUPE

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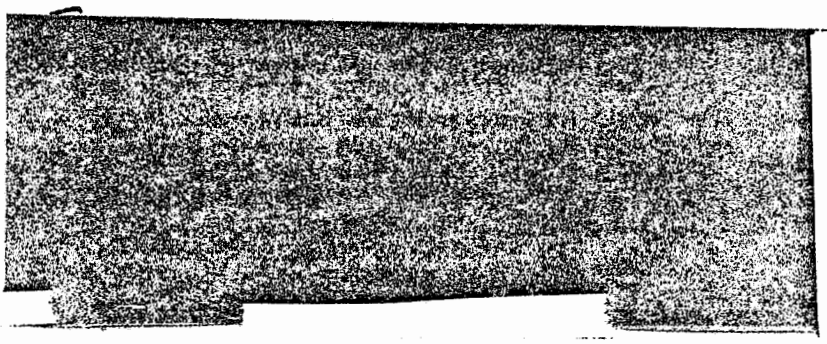

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9. COMMENT: THE MEDIA IS PREDICTING GREAT TROUBLE WITHIN THE NDP AS THE PARTY MOVES TO SELECT A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, AND THIS MAY BECOME A SELF-FULFILLING PROPHESY. THE NEWSPAPERS HAVE BEEN QUICK TO POUNCE UPON SIGNS OF DISCORD IN THE NDP AND THE TEMPTATION FOR EITHER OF THE TWO NDP KIMS TO ESCALATE CRITICISM, ESPECIALLY AFTER CENSORSHIP IS COMPLETELY LIFTED, MAY BE OVERWHELMING. NEVERTHELESS, THE THREE KIMS HAVE KEPT CRITICISM OF EACH OTHER AT A RESPONSIBLE LEVEL SO FAR, BUT THE GAME HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN. GLEYSTEEN

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